

Remarks

Claims 1 and 5 are independent claims. Claims 2-4 depend from claim 1. The Examiner rejected all of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over McBrearty, U.S. Patent No. 6,823,491 in view of Ciarlante et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,594,819. Since the combination does not disclose and would not have rendered obvious the claimed inventions, Applicant respectfully traverses.

Unlike Applicant's invention, which involves dynamic traffic management over a network, McBrearty addresses the problem of a web surfer who needs quick access to the site-specific search engine of a web site. The example McBrearty gives is the intra-site search engine one might find at <http://www.ibm.com>. McBrearty discloses that sometimes users "enter" a site on a page lacking the site-specific search engine interface. McBrearty discloses providing a "button" on a web browser that will locate the site-specific engine for presentment to the surfer, or if there is none preexisting on the site, that will present the surfer with a generic one.

While McBrearty does mention ordinary use of the site-specific search engine to perform a search, McBrearty does not disclose dynamic traffic management as claimed by Applicant. Namely, Applicant's claim 1 recites a system wherein a referral provider predefines preferences (i.e., traffic management parameters) for routing traffic generated by a user computer's search request transmitted to the referral provider. McBrearty does not disclose a referral provider, or predefining preferences, as claimed. In addition, as the Examiner acknowledged McBrearty lacks a means for establishing an account.

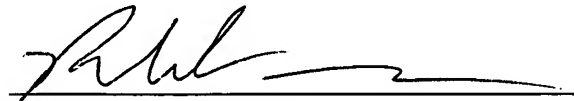
For these reasons, McBrearty also lacks the elements of dependent claims 2-4. Regarding claim 2, since McBrearty does not disclose traffic management parameters, it necessarily does not disclose designated target locations or key search terms as examples of such parameters. Regarding claim 3, McBrearty does not disclose a search referral module routing traffic to the designated target location as specified by such a traffic management parameter. And regarding claim 4, McBrearty does not disclose comparing user search terms with key search terms which comprise traffic management parameters.

The Examiner cites Ciarlante for its disclosure of details of implementing an account for a referrer. However, Ciarlante does not disclose establishing an account for a referral provider as claimed. Ciarlante's disclosed accounts are associated with hosted applications --- an entirely different field from Applicant's invention having nothing to do with dynamic traffic management in the context of search engines.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections and early allowance. You are authorized to charge any fees to the undersigned's deposit account (#14-1131).

Respectfully submitted,

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